

TOP SECRET

NRO & USAF REVIEWS COMPLETED

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[redacted]
28 April 1962

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MEMORANDUM FOR : Director Central Intelligence
SUBJECT : Satellite Reconnaissance

1. This memorandum is for your information.
2. Project CORONA is a part of the DISCOVERER Thor-Agena Satellite Program. The first launch was made in February 1959. Thirty-nine vehicle launches have been attempted thus far including engineering tests, bio-medical, and other experiments in addition to the photo reconnaissance camera payloads. The first successful reconnaissance mission occurred in August 1960. There have been a total of eleven successful reconnaissance missions. Additional launches are scheduled through September 1962 reaching a maximum rate of three per month. Sufficient vehicles are being procured to extend the program into 1963 if necessary. The agena remains in orbit until decay.

3. Three generations of cameras have been used. These are all 24 inch focal length and cover a lateral swath of about 200 miles. Approximately five million square miles of coverage is possible excluding clouds in the four day life. Initial ground resolution was 25 to 40 feet. The latest stereo cameras produce resolutions of 8 to 10 feet.

4. [redacted] is a descendent of the Air Force SAMOS program. This is an Atlas-Agena vehicle combination. The first was launched two days ago but not recovered. The camera is 36 inch focal length and will cover approximately 200 miles swath width and about two million square miles per day in the five to eight day life. Ground resolution of about 8 feet stereo is expected. This program is scheduled to April 1964 reaching a maximum launch rate of two per month. The entire vehicle is de-orbited.

5. There have been several earlier SAMOS launch attempts with one success. The success was an E-1 camera non-recoverable electronic readout system. That mission produced ground resolution of about 100 feet.

6. Project LANYARD is an interim series of five Thor-ad Agena vehicle launches between January and June 1963. The payload is an adaptation from the cancelled Air Force E-5 SAMOS project. The camera is 66 inch focal length and expected to cover a lateral swath of 40 to 50 miles at a resolution of five feet in stereo. The film is to be recovered as in CORONA after a four day life.

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9. Project ARGON is a part of CORONA. Four launches of this mapping satellite are scheduled this year. The three inch focal length camera will produce resolutions of 400 to 600 feet but redundantly over extensive areas for mapping purposes. A stellar or star photographing camera is included for accurate orbit fixing.

10. Project 35 is an Air Force weather reconnaissance satellite which together with NASA TIROS will give almost constant real time weather reporting during the next two years.

11. Project MIDAS is the Air Force early warning satellite using Atlas-Agena vehicles. Nine are scheduled through 1963. The payload senses the infra red emissions of large ground launched rockets and transmits this information back to the U. S. by micro-wave signals.

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signed

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HERBERT SCOVILLE, JR.
Deputy Director
(Research)

ANALYST - 2 VQO

ANALYST - 2 VQO

STANAVIT - 2 VQO

INVEST - 2 VQO

Sign

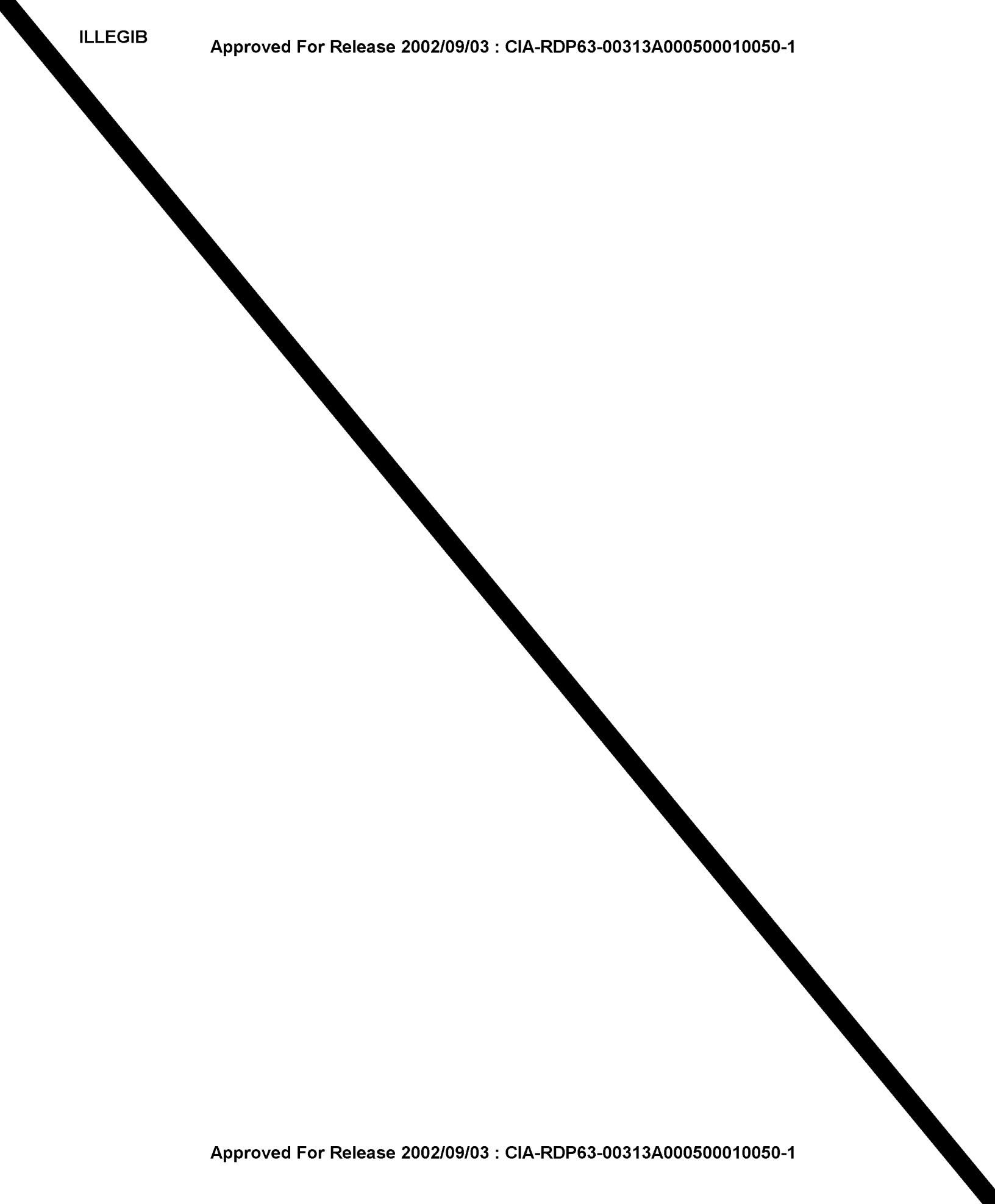
(Signature)

STANLEY W. BEERLI

Colonel, USAF

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